

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER OBJECTIVES: INPUT  
FOR THE GRAND MESA, UNCOMPAHGRE AND  
GUNNISON NATIONAL FORESTS PLAN REVISION

# **Summary of Stakeholder Objectives: Input for the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests Plan Revision**

*"The challenge for us as we go forward is to do more than manage the resources but to also manage the different interests that are using the forests."*

...Quote from GMUG National Forest Stakeholder

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## **I. Introduction**

This phase of the project focuses on the goals and objectives of the stakeholder interests that were interviewed regarding the use, management and conservation of the public lands, particularly national forest system lands of the Grand Mesa Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests. The goals and objectives for the stakeholder groups were obtained during five trips to the GMUG National Forests to conduct focus groups and one-on-one interviews with over 200 stakeholders. Interest groups, government officials, USDA Forest Service (FS) employees and concerned citizens were interviewed during these trips. We also conducted interviews with individuals in the front-range and telephone interviews with those that were unable to meet with us during the trips to the area.

The stakeholders that were interviewed for this project were selected from mailing lists provided by the GMUG Supervisor's office, mailing lists from the district offices on the GMUG, newspaper articles, internet searches and recommendations from those interviewed. The interviews concentrated on three primary topics: first, issues of importance regarding the use, management and conservation of the public lands; second, the objectives of the stakeholders regarding the use, management and conservation of the public lands; and third, the role of the Forest Service in managing the public lands.

The Phase One GMUG Report (2002) provides results from the interviews that summarize the forest planning issues of importance to those interviewed and the perceived role of the Forest Service in addressing those issues. This report will present the results of the interviews regarding the objectives that evolved from the concern over the issues raised by each stakeholder. The objectives from the various groups were then combined across similar groups.<sup>1</sup>

The next section provides a discussion of the application of objectives analysis to the GMUG plan revision process. This is followed by a presentation of the objectives for various stakeholder interests. Section IV constructs a combined objectives hierarchy for all stakeholder groups. The final section provides a summary and conclusions of the report. An appendix provides background on the literature that discusses objectives hierarchies, decision characteristics, and the links between objectives and decision making.

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<sup>1</sup> The stakeholders were similar but not necessarily identical. Therefore, all objectives listed for the combined hierarchies may not apply to all groups that were interviewed.

## II. An Application to the GMUG National Forest Plan Revision Process

The decision context for this project is the GMUG Forests Plan revision process. This process is mandated by the National Forest Management Act of 1976, which requires the Forest Service to update their Forest Management Plans every 10-15 years. The Plan revision process triggers the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), requiring the Forest Service to conduct an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and involve the public in the decision making process.

The EIS process imposes several important requirements on the agency's decision-making (Loomis 1993). The agency's proposed action must be written down in enough detail to *consider* environmental impacts. A wide range of alternatives to the proposed action must be evaluated, including an evaluation of the effects of implementing each alternative on the biophysical and human environment. An essential requirement of the EIS is that a written justification for selecting the proposed action over the other alternatives be made. Additionally, NEPA has formal requirements for involvement of the public in the EIS process. There are a minimum of three basic periods of public participation and input that must be provided: the scoping process, the Draft EIS period, and the Record of Decision/Final EIS commenting period. As a result of these institutional requirements, the Forest Service must consider multiple alternatives in its Forest Plan revision as well as include the public and their preferences in the decision making process.

The GMUG plan revision process creates an opportunity to examine the multiple and complex objectives that should guide alternative development and selection in this process. There are many stakeholders with diverse values, opinions and objectives for national forest land use, management and conservation. A careful analysis of these objectives can result in developing new and innovative alternatives to meet the diverse objectives and goals of the many stakeholder groups. Although the Forest Service is the ultimate decision maker, they are required by law to "consider" the public's values and preferences into the decision making process. This process does not guarantee that conflict and controversy won't arise, although it will provide a foundation for evaluating the source of potential conflict.

The following section identifies objectives hierarchies for each of the major stakeholder groups.

### **III. Stakeholder Objectives Hierarchies**

The process used to develop the objectives hierarchies for the various stakeholder groups involved six steps. These steps are:

1. Conduct interviews with the identified stakeholders;
2. Transcribe the record of the meeting;
3. Construct the objectives hierarchy (focusing on fundamental and means level objectives);
4. Submit the objectives hierarchy to the stakeholders for validation;
5. Modify the objectives hierarchy as needed; and
6. Combine objectives hierarchies among similar groups.

The objectives reported here are the results of more than 50 objectives hierarchies that were constructed from the focus groups and interviews. Each objectives hierarchy was confirmed by those that participated in the focus group meetings. The objectives hierarchies were combined for groups and individuals with similar interests. Many groups and individuals have similar fundamental objectives, but do not agree on the means to achieve the fundamental objective. Therefore, it is common that some means level objectives are conflicting.

The following interest categories were used to construct composite objectives hierarchies:

- non-motorized recreation,
- motorized recreation,
- ranching,
- timber,
- mineral and energy,
- non-motorized outfitters,
- local government,
- environmentalists, and
- downhill ski areas.

We realize that not all of the groups that were combined into these categories will agree on all issues regarding the use, management and conservation of the forest lands. However, it was necessary to organize the material into a manageable set of objectives. Areas where there is significant disagreement will be highlighted in the discussion.

**A. Non-Motorized Recreation.** Four objectives hierarchies were combined for non-motorized recreation stakeholders. These groups included the following: trails groups, mountain biking interests, and Nordic skiing groups. The objectives presented below are important across all the non-motorized recreation groups. They include the fundamental level objectives (1, 2, 3, ...) and associated means level objectives (a, b, c, ...).

1. Managing recreational use within the current infrastructure and budget of the Forest Service.
  - a. Using local input and decision-making to guide this process.
  - b. Developing a fee structure from recreational use with the proceeds used locally.
  - c. Defining budget priorities that ensure a usable and properly maintained trail system.
2. Increasing the use of volunteer groups to maintain and manage the use of the national forests.
  - a. Providing materials and encouragement for volunteer groups.
  - b. Providing standards for the needs of various trails.
  - c. Hiring a Forest Service volunteer liaison to assist with projects.
  - d. Providing training on use of appropriate equipment for trail maintenance.
  - e. Ensuring open communication and feedback on trail work.
  - f. Working with the volunteer groups in partnership to promote safe and environmentally sound trail use and to relieve congestion in high use areas.
  - g. Using more coordinated workdays (like National Trails Day) where volunteers can learn from FS out on the trail.
3. Developing an educational program targeted toward the public regarding appropriate trail usage and etiquette.
  - a. Using public service announcements.
  - b. Teaching trail etiquette to the public.
  - c. Teaching respect for wildlife and the land.
  - d. Using appropriate signage to ensure proper use of trails.
  - e. Working and coordinating with volunteers to provide information.

The non-motorized recreation trails groups believe that the FS should maintain trails and roads. They realize that there are limited Forest Service resources and would like to volunteer to help the Forest Service in these types of activities. Forest Service education about responsible behavior, treading lightly, trail locations, and signage is also very important for these groups.

**B. Motorized Recreation.** Eight objectives hierarchies were combined for motorized recreation interests, including snowmobiling, jeeping, motorcycle, ATV, and four wheeling groups. The objectives presented below are important across all the motorized recreation groups. They include the fundamental level objectives (1, 2, 3, ...) and associated means level objectives (a, b, c, ...).

1. Managing Forest Service lands consistent with the multiple use mandate.
  - a. Including local input from the public through collaborative efforts.
  - b. Ensuring that the outcome of collaborative efforts is part of the input in the planning process.
  - c. Maximizing the use of resources as long as sustainability is maintained.
  - d. Providing open communication (transparency) between all the agencies involved in the process.
  - e. Providing a process that encourages understanding and acceptance.
2. Basing decisions on good science.
  - a. Developing a competent (and required) monitoring and evaluation program since it is critical to informed decision making.
  - b. Ensuring that all users will be expected to abide by the same rules and policies when using public lands.
  - c. Understanding that there is a balance to be met between the demands of various users.
3. Ensuring access to public lands for all user groups and individuals.
  - a. Avoiding closing roads and trails without documented reasons.
  - b. Relocating trails and roads as often as is practical instead of just closing and losing access (no net lose of trails).



- c. Leaving existing trails or corridors open when an area has been designated primitive.
- d. Leaving these roads as they are – no improvement (providing for a more challenging trail riding experience).
- e. Measuring the impact to wildlife that is universal to all forms of human interaction.
- f. Reassessing the travel restrictions that were implemented for wildlife benefit when the indicator species exceeds desired population goals.
- g. Identifying recreational loop systems (i.e., ATV, single track motorcycle, bicycle and four-wheel drive) which offer the provision of a sustainable recreation resource opportunity.
- h. Identifying the user demand and follow through on the goals identified in the Forest Plan to increase the supply with the increase in demand.
- i. Recognizing that the vast majority of motorized recreation users will cooperate with staying on a designated route system if the system fulfills the need and route marking and rules are clear.
- j. Ensuring that user fees are not implemented unless there are added benefits.
- k. Instituting recreation fees on all areas and not just in select areas.
- l. Providing special permits to seniors and handicapped people to use Wilderness areas in a motorized capacity.
- m. No more wilderness designations.
- n. No zoning of the forests
- o. All trails and roads should be multiple use.

The motorized groups often feel that the FS is closing trails, roads and areas to motorized uses without any type of systematic decision criteria or process. As a result, these groups believe that they are being “shut out” of FS lands. Maintaining access is vitally important for these users, and many believe that the multiple use mandate stipulates that motorized recreation must be accommodated. Zoning the forest for specific uses (i.e., motorized area separate from a non-motorized area) is not a popular alternative for these users.

**C. Ranching.** Five objectives hierarchies were combined for the ranching interests in the GMUG area. The objectives presented

below are important across all the non-motorized recreation groups. They include the fundamental level objectives (1, 2, 3, ...) and associated means level objectives (a, b, c, ...).

1. Enhancing the opportunity to work with the Forest Service as partners in managing public lands for grazing.
  - a. Maintaining a collaborative attitude not a competitive attitude when dealing with different stakeholder groups.
  - b. Ensuring that everyone knows what others are doing on public lands.
  - c. Ensuring that all permittees receive information from FS regarding road closures, tree plantings, etc., anything that can affect the permit, prior to the decision being made.
2. Providing more localized decision-making within the Forest planning process.
  - a. Ensuring that the decisions made in these planning processes are carried out and used.
  - b. Using science to guide the decisions made concerning public land health.
  - c. Keeping decisions at the site-specific level and not for the entire forest or region.
  - d. Respecting public input from citizens groups and individuals within the region of the forest.
3. Expanding planning considerations to include ranching and recognizing its value in the social and economic parts of the communities.
  - a. Supporting ranching in order to preserve open space.
  - b. Explicitly understanding that ranchers need public lands to maintain their cultural legacy.
  - c. Supporting historical access on routes associated with grazing permits (this access could be specified in the permit).
  - d. Maintaining a healthy range and riparian areas (controlling deer and elk).
  - e. Keeping permits active with ranching interests.
  - f. Tying water rights to permits to ensure adequate amounts of water.
  - g. Allocating money to help with soil conservation and other grazing problems.

4. Using good science and active management to make decisions on how to manage the forest.
  - a. Having knowledgeable people (range cons) that can make these types of decisions.
  - b. Increasing the number of people working in the district offices to keep up with the work and project demands.
  - c. Ensuring the projects and permits are finished in a timely manner.
  - d. Encouraging more cross agency collaboration through the use of groups such as local advisory groups.
  - e. Sharing of watershed monitoring and enforcement on all public lands.
  - f. Taking responsibility for making decisions and not abdicating their authority to vocal local groups.
  - g. Keeping politics and personal beliefs out of the decision making processes concerning the NF.
  - h. Making sure that the decision-making process is not dominated by vocal minority groups (i.e. that everyones voice is considered)
  - i. Developing a science-based approach to managing the Gunnison Sage Grouse population.

During the focus group meetings there was the common belief that the FS is reducing their numbers (AUM) without systematic decision criteria. They would like to see the Forest Service working collaboratively with the ranchers to make decisions about allotments and permits. Often, they feel the Forest Service succumbs to environmental factions who want to eliminate public lands ranching. Including science in the decision making process is important to the ranchers. Also, the ranchers feel that their rural way of life is slowly being eliminated by the decisions of the Forest Service, and they want the Forest Service to understand that their decisions have a significant impact on local economies and that this impact needs to be considered in the decision-making process.

**D. Timber Interests.** Two objective hierarchies represent the timber interests. The fundamental and means level objectives are listed below.

1. Improving the health of the forest.
  - a. Making the timber available for sale equal to the agreed upon ASQs.

- b. Supporting restoration forestry and a continuation of the green timber sale program.
  - c. Recognizing that the Forest Service needs the help of the timber industry to maintain a healthy forest.
- 2. Increasing the role of the forest products industry to support local economic development.
  - a. Realizing that the timber industry needs the source of wood that public lands can provide.
  - b. Supporting the economic base of local communities.
  - c. Preserving the cultural community history that the timber industry brings to the region.
- 3. Promoting consensus based decisions in an efficient and effective way.
  - a. Recognizing the time and scheduling constraints of working individuals when scheduling plan revision meetings.

The timber and wood products industries are also frustrated with the small number of timber sales that the Forest Service is putting up every year. They would like to see the Forest Service follow their allowable sale quantity of timber specified in the management plan. Having an unreliable amount of wood supply provides a difficult wood products business environment.

**E. Mineral & Energy Interests.** Four objectives hierarchies were combined for mineral and energy interests, including coal mining and oil and gas companies. The objectives presented below are important across all the non-motorized recreation groups. They include the fundamental level objectives (1, 2, 3, ...) and associated means level objectives (a, b, c, ...).

- 1. Providing reasonable access to public lands so that mineral extraction companies can extract the natural resources, particularly in areas that have historically produced mineral and energy resources.
  - a. Co-managing lands with Forest Service and mineral and energy companies.
  - b. Holding accountable users that are responsible for damage to public lands (surface damage versus subsurface damage).
  - c. Providing access to public lands so that mineral and energy companies can manage the infrastructure and the natural resources.

- d. Allowing roads to be built for access for operation and maintenance activities.
  - e. Increasing the number of acres available for mineral and energy operations.
- 2. Improving oversight consistency across state and federal regulatory agencies.
  - a. Increasing timely communication between agencies.
  - b. Increasing the understanding of what each agency expects from the mining industry.
  - c. Trusting the mining companies and the state agency that permits them and holds reclamation bonds to do their job.
  - d. Working to alleviate compliance conflicts that exist across state and federal regulatory agencies.
- 3. Increasing Forest Service responsibility for decision-making on how to manage public lands and mining and energy operations.
  - a. Taking a stand once a decision is made.
  - b. Proactively communicating this to the public as a partner with the mining operations.
  - c. Working together to convince the public that mineral extraction is not "bad" for public lands.

The energy and mining companies would like the Forest Service to maintain the amount of access required to extract the resources when the prices and timing are right for the companies. Also, these industries feel that the regulatory requirements are onerous, and that there is a significant amount of duplication across agencies that could be streamlined.

**F. Non-motorized Outfitters.** Four objectives hierarchies were combined to represent the non-motorized outfitters. The objectives presented below are important across all the non-motorized recreation groups. They include the fundamental level objectives (1, 2, 3, ...) and associated means level objectives (a, b, c, ...).

- 1. Decreasing the amount of ATV use on public lands, especially during peak hunting seasons.
  - a. Closing illegal trails
  - b. Closing down and reclaiming old timber roads
  - c. Enforcing legal trail use.
  - d. Attaching large fines to illegal trail use.

- e. Reducing the numbers of hunting permits.
  - f. Reducing access to hunters during fall seasons.
  - g. Posting a policy of "Trails closed unless posted open".
  - h. Maintaining FS visibility in the forest, especially during peak seasons.
2. Working with the Colorado Department of Wildlife to ensure healthy wildlife and their habitat.
    - a. Avoiding opposing objectives across agencies.
    - b. Providing big game with secure areas where no motorized vehicles are allowed.
    - c. Improving the habitat for wildlife.
  3. Instituting a travel management plan that the Forest Service can supervise.
    - a. Ensuring an adequate budget to maintain and enforce the decisions in the travel management plan.
    - b. Increasing fines for abuses of the travel management policies.
  4. Increasing the support for the financial infrastructure of communities located near the national forests.
    - a. Managing permitted recreational businesses for the benefit of the recreational users desiring those services.
    - b. Streamlining the permit process by hiring enough staff to handle all of the paperwork involved in the permit process in a timely fashion.
    - c. Working with the permittee and being a true partner.
    - d. Providing service day flexibility for the permittee to accommodate year to year differences in their business and business growth.
    - e. Respecting the property value that a permit has to the permittee and its value at time of sale.
    - f. Considering seniority of permittees that have been in business using public lands for priority use.

Once again, the outfitters with whom we spoke would like the FS to recognize that their decisions can be critical to the survival of these businesses in the local communities. They would like to work collaboratively with the FS for decisions relevant to their permits. Additionally, these non-motorized outfitters (most of whom were horse packer/hunting outfitters) would like motorized hunting on

ATVs restricted and such restrictions enforced by the Forest Service.

**G. Local Governments.** Fourteen objectives hierarchies were combined to represent the local government interests. The large number of local government interests reflects the fact that the three forests impact a large number of communities and counties. The objectives presented below are important across all the non-motorized recreation groups. They include the fundamental level objectives (1, 2, 3, ...) and associated means level objectives (a, b, c, ...).

1. Maintaining access to all parts of the forest with existing roads.
  - a. Actively clearing and maintaining roads on the forest.
  - b. Working with the county to clear and maintain roads.
  - c. Ensuring that there is an adequate budget to maintain roads.
  - d. Keeping funding in the local communities.
  - e. Avoiding user fees for recreational uses, such as driving, parking and hiking (campground fees are ok).
2. Ensuring the economic health of forest-dependent communities.
  - a. Keeping the planning process under local control and avoiding micromanaging.
  - b. Ensuring there is a balance of activities that the Forest Service supports.
  - c. Protecting the scenic character of the areas.
  - d. Ensuring that the unique problems of each area are familiar to the district rangers.
  - e. Working with communities to ensure that off-site impacts are included in the decisions that the Forest Service makes.
  - f. Fostering small timber sales that promote both forest and community health.
  - g. Expanding the practice of timber sales on public lands.
  - h. Keeping mining operations productive and running.
  - i. Providing a permitting process that allows outfitters to do business on public lands.
  - j. Ensuring adequate enforcement on public lands.
  - k. Ensuring that no more land goes into wilderness protection.

3. Working closely with the Colorado Department of Wildlife to maintain and protect wildlife.
  - a. Encouraging the DOW to spend more of their budget on these joint efforts.
  - b. Ensuring that there are consistent policies across agencies.
  - c. Developing limits on hunters and ATV uses during hunting seasons that are enforced both by FS and DOW.
4. Ensuring that there is an open line of communication between the Forest Service, the counties, and local communities.
  - a. Ensuring that no one group of users dominates the forest planning process.
  - b. Using advisory councils that solicit public input.
  - c. Sharing information & resources with other federal, state, and county agencies.
5. Developing a collaborative way to include all the various stakeholders in the decision making process.
  - a. Engaging in the collaborative process with local communities.
  - b. Using the RAC model from the BLM to get local input.
  - c. Putting more emphasis on the local input.
  - d. Including input from others outside the area.
  - e. Communicating with communities concerning the planning processes.
  - f. Understanding community values and goals.

The local governments would like to be partners in the public lands decision making process. Additionally, the local governments are concerned about the “off-site impacts” that FS decisions often create. They would like the Forest Service to better understand, collaborate and plan for some of the impacts in their public land decisions. Public lands are a significant portion of many of the counties that surround the GMUG National Forests, and the local economies often rely on the tourist and resource-based amenities that are derived from the national forest. The local government representatives interviewed indicated that these types of considerations should be factored into the FS decision making process.

**H. Environmentalists.** Seven objectives hierarchies were combined to represent environmentalist’s objectives. The objectives presented



below are important across all the non-motorized recreation groups. They include the fundamental level objectives (1, 2, 3, ...) and associated means level objectives (a, b, c, ...).

1. Expanding the stock of contiguous habitat to support critical wildlife functions such as reproduction and forage.
  - a. Maintaining large blocks of habitat.
  - b. Maintaining wildlife linkages between these blocks of land.
  - c. Reducing fragmentation by roads and trails between unfragmented habitat blocks.
  - d. Inventorying all wildlife habitat and roadless areas.
  - e. Acquiring more Wilderness areas in the 8500-10,000 foot range where there is very little current Wilderness (this elevation band is considered critical to maintaining biodiversity and habitat values).
  - f. Recognizing that habitat effectiveness should be measured by reproductive success or problems and not so much by elk populations.
  - g. Reintroducing carnivores to bring the ecosystem back into equilibrium.
2. Recognizing off-site impacts and incorporating the consequences of those impacts when the Forest Service is making decisions in the EA and EIS process.
  - a. Considering the impact of recreation and commercial uses in adjoining areas.
  - b. Evaluating ski area expansions on total impacts not isolated impacts.
  - c. Eliminating all subsidies to ski areas.
  - d. Assessing the need for ski area expansions on a regional basis not just a particular location (don't focus on the local desirability of a particular ski area).
3. Minimizing the number of roads on national forest lands.
  - a. Keeping roadless areas as roadless.
  - b. Closing and reclaiming old timber roads.
  - c. Implementing a "closed unless posted open" policy for all roads.
  - d. Keeping wilderness review areas as roadless.
  - e. Closing illegal roads on all public lands.
  - f. Developing a process of identifying roadless areas and looking at their ecological value.

The environmental groups believe that the FS should manage the public lands for the ecological and biological functioning of the forests. Recreation, both motorized and non-motorized, should be assessed as to its impact on the lands and limits should be put in place to help restore these areas. Additionally, the environmental groups believe that roadless and Wilderness areas are important tracts of land that should be preserved and protected for their primitive character.

**I. Ski Areas.** Three objectives hierarchies were combined to represent the objectives for downhill skiing interests in this area. The objectives presented below are important across all the non-motorized recreation groups. They are the fundamental level objectives (1, 2, 3, ...) and associated means level objectives (a, b, c, ...).

1. Providing consistent policies for everyone that uses public lands.
  - a. Ensuring that all ski resorts face the same rules and regulations when dealing with the Forest Service.
  - b. Ensuring that all stakeholders doing business on public lands follow the best management practices.
  - c. Ensuring that all federal and state agencies provide consistent rules and regulations to guide ski industry decisions.
2. Protecting the economic base of local communities.
  - a. Forging public-private partnerships that can benefit the economic base of communities.
  - b. Working with developers to help make the use of public lands a success.
  - c. Allowing ski areas to utilize their national forest lease to market and advertise ski products.
  - d. Providing additional terrain, facilitating the addition of more lifts and the upgrading of existing lifts, and redevelopment of existing ski areas.
  - e. Continuing to help meet the demands for downhill skiing.
  - f. Listening to all stakeholders in the community, not just one, vocal group.

Once again, the ski areas with whom we spoke believe that the Forest Service needs to understand the businesses' reliance on their national forest lease. They would like the Forest Service to allow

more flexibility in terms of allowing the ski area to operate successfully (i.e., allow marketing and commercial uses) and provide recreational opportunities for the public.

#### **IV. Combined Objectives from the Hierarchies**

The objectives hierarchies reported above were combined into one over-all set of objectives statements. We identified 25 statements, based on means level objectives, that were important for various types of stakeholder groups. The statements were selected based upon their importance to multiple groups and not just one individual stakeholder. These statements reflect the objectives of the stakeholder groups interviewed and not the Forest Service. Also, these 25 statements are not intended to be inclusive of all the important issues that should be considered by the GMUG planning team. These statements provide a foundation for determining what is important to the stakeholder groups that participated in the interviews. These statements range in importance from very important to not at all important to the various groups. These statements would provide the foundation for discussions with the general public regarding their perceptions as to what should be of major concern in the plan revision.<sup>2</sup> The 25 objective statements are presented below.

- Partnering with local groups or volunteers to create ways to monitor regulations.
- Providing a reliable amount of small timber sales to locally owned businesses to promote community economic diversity.
- Allowing road construction that is needed for the extraction of minerals, oil, gas and other energy resources.
- Designating some areas where motorized access is not allowed during big game hunting season.
- Maintaining current grazing permits at levels that support existing local ranching operations.
- Recommending an increase in designated Wilderness areas for some Forest Service lands below 10,000 feet (lands that can provide a primitive experience).
- Allocating additional land to expand existing ski area facilities (for example, new runs and buildings, adding in new lifts).

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<sup>2</sup> These statements provide the foundation for a survey instrument that was designed to determine the level of importance that the general public attached to the objective statements identified by the more actively involved in the planning process.

- Maintaining seasonal road and trail closures that limit all recreation access for the protection of wildlife during nesting, calving and other critical periods.
- Separating roads and trails on National Forest lands into motorized and non-motorized recreational uses.
- Using prescribed fires to improve wildlife habitat.
- Increasing areas where motorized uses are allowed.
- Closing areas to recreational uses when the Forest Service cannot properly maintain these areas due to budget constraints.
- Closing user-created trails and roads on the Forest that are not part of the designated Forest road and trail system.
- Increasing the acres of National Forest lands available for exploration, development, and removal of oil, gas, and other energy resources.
- Requiring ranchers to use grazing practices that improve riparian ecosystems.
- Emphasizing local voices and community interests near the forest over others in the planning process.
- Using the natural resources located on National Forest lands to meet the economic needs of communities near these lands.
- Providing a reliable supply of timber to support local wood product industries.
- Charging a fair market price for conducting business on Forest Service lands (for example, ranchers, outfitters, recreation events, timber companies, mining companies, ski resorts).
- Providing habitat conditions suitable for the reintroduction of large carnivores (for example, grizzly bears, wolves).
- Setting quotas and requiring permits of the general public to avoid overcrowding and damage to certain recreation areas (for example limit number of permits for recreational uses).
- Allowing corporate marketing and advertising on National Forest lands (for example, an advertising displayed on a chair lift or a billboard at a trailhead).
- Using land exchanges to consolidate National Forest lands and to prevent development in sensitive areas.
- Charging entrance or user fees in high use areas to improve the condition of those areas.

## V. Summary, Conclusions & Limitations

The results presented above provide a foundation for understanding what is important to the diverse stakeholders involved in the plan revision process for

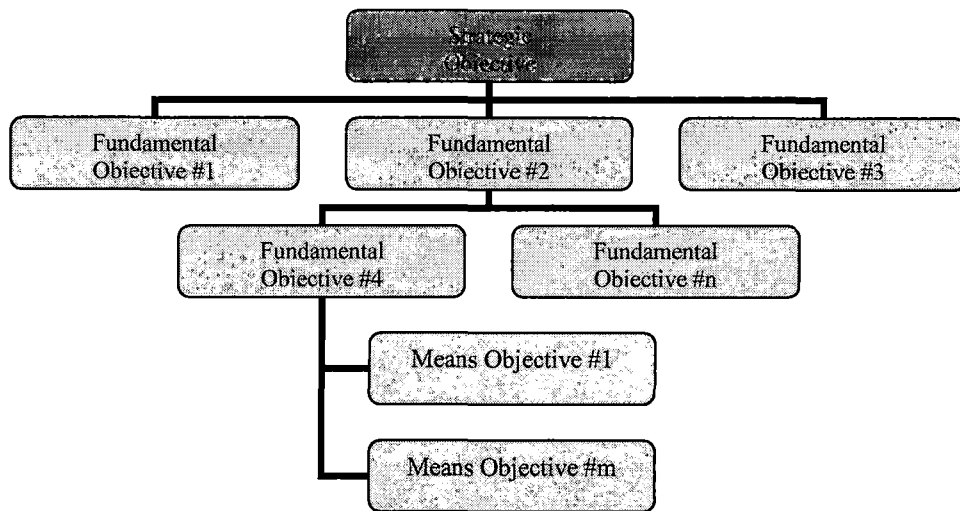
the GMUG forests. However, there are two issues that need to be considered when using the above information. First, the information provided above is only relevant to the groups and individuals that participated in the focus groups or interviews. The information provided has been verified by members of each group interviewed, however, it is not generalizable to the public since they were not surveyed to determine their importance ratings for each objective. The objectives statements presented in section IV provide the foundation for a survey instrument that could be used to determine the degree of importance of particular stakeholder objectives to the general public. Since the survey was not implemented, the findings reported here reflect only the positions of those interviewed.

Second, the objectives statements were solicited from the interviewees without focusing on legal restrictions or mandates that may influence or prohibit certain actions. In order to encourage a free flowing exchange of ideas we did not attempt to discuss what was “legally” possible or not. These results are included since they provide information to the Forest Service regarding the level of understanding of the legal constraints facing the planning effort by those interviewed. Increasing stakeholder understanding of these legal constraints may help when communicating with the various groups, thereby reducing the potential for conflict and discontent.

## Appendix A: Background on Objectives and the Decision Context

The foundation for the approach used to collect and construct the objectives statements and hierarchies is based upon the work of Keeney (1992) and Keeney and Raifa (1993). Keeney (1992) states that *“the achievement of objectives is the sole reason for being interested in any decision”* (p.55). The basic definition of an objective is that it is a statement of “something that one desires to achieve.” An objective is characterized by three features: a decision context, an object and a direction of preference. For example, a Forest Service decision about closing a trail is a decision context, the object is access to the trail, and the direction of preference is more access or less access.

There are three types of objectives: strategic, fundamental, and means objectives. These objectives are arranged in a hierarchy where the strategic objective is the highest level objective that is intended to guide all decision making. Fundamental level objectives characterize an essential reason for interest in the decision situation. A means objective is a lower level objective that implies how the fundamental level objective can be met or achieved. Therefore, the objectives structure can be considered as a “means-end” chain where the means, fundamental and strategic objectives are arranged in a hierarchy. As one moves from the strategic to the means level objectives the focus becomes more specific. A strategic objective is a general statement of what one desires to achieve. For example, the overall strategic objective for an environmental group may be to “achieve a healthy forest ecosystem”. A timber group may also have the same strategic objective, however, differences emerge when the discussion focuses on the “means” to achieve this objective. The results of the interviews conducted with the various stakeholder groups indicated that the strategic objective of all the groups was to “maximize the health of the forests”. There are significant differences in how to achieve this objective (the fundamental and means level objectives). Therefore, the report focuses only on the fundamental and means level objectives. The following figure demonstrates how an objectives hierarchy is arranged. The strategic level objective is the ultimate end objective of the stakeholder. Fundamental level objectives vary in their degree of specificity and there are multiple levels of objectives at the fundamental level. The strategic level objective for the stakeholder will have multiple fundamental level objectives for achieving the end objective. Finally, each fundamental level objective will have multiple means level objectives to achieve the fundamental level objective.



Structuring objectives around a decision context should result in a deeper and broader understanding of the values of the decision. Typically, an “objectives hierarchy” is created for each interview or focus group that demonstrates the strategic objective that guides all other objectives, i.e., fundamental objectives and means objectives. The means objectives are listed under each fundamental objective. There are generally several means level objectives to achieve one fundamental level objective and several fundamental level objectives to obtain the strategic level objective. It is common that objectives will conflict at the fundamental and means level. This conflict requires the decision-maker to make trade-offs regarding the most desirable approach to meeting the higher level objective. For example, a ranching group may have the following fundamental level objectives: “maximizing profits from cattle grazed on public lands” and “improve the riparian ecosystem”. To meet the first objective the number of cattle grazed would be increased, whereas, to meet the second objective may require reducing the size of the herd. A decision would have to be made as to which objective is more important at the time of the decision.

The decision context and the fundamental objectives combine to frame the decision situation. According to Keeney (1992); “The decision context defines the set of alternatives to consider for a specific decision situation” (p. 30). For example, the planning process for a particular forest requires the decision maker to specify alternative management scenarios (according to NEPA and NFMA guidelines). These alternatives combined with the fundamental objectives determine the bounds on the decision. The fundamental objectives help focus the decision maker regarding the desired outcome within the decision context.

Decision makers are often not the only people specifying objectives. In many complex decision problems, objectives for a decision situation are specified from multiple individuals who are interested in and knowledgeable about the decision situation. Many decision contexts are complex and contain multiple objectives. Some of the objectives may be quantifiable with specified attributes, while others are more qualitative in nature. Additionally, many objectives are uncertain, making the need for valuing the various levels and degree of the objective or goal more important in the decision context. Overall, understanding and structuring objectives allows the decision makers to have better knowledge and flexibility about the alternatives chosen, the choice that needs to be made and the inherent tradeoffs embedded within that decision. For an example of an application of a structured process for evaluating trade-offs between various objectives see Martin et al. (2000).



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